

1.0 INTRODUCTION

On January 7, 2013, Transcontinental Gas Pipeline Company (Transco) filed an application with the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC or Commission) in Docket Number CP13-36-000 for the proposed Rockaway Delivery Lateral Project (Rockaway Project) under Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act (NGA), as amended, and Parts 157 and 284 of the Commission's regulations. The application was noticed in the Federal Register on January 22, 2013. Transco is seeking a Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (Certificate) from the Commission for the Rockaway Project to construct and operate a new natural gas transmission pipeline and associated facilities in Queens and Kings Counties, New York.

On April 9, 2013, Transco filed an application with the FERC in Docket Number CP13-132-000 for the proposed Northeast Connector Project under Section 7(c) of the NGA, as amended, and the above-referenced regulations. The application was noticed in the Federal Register on April 24, 2013. Transco is seeking a Certificate from the Commission for the Northeast Connector Project to modify existing compressor station facilities along its existing pipeline system in York County, Pennsylvania and Mercer and Middlesex Counties, New Jersey. The Northeast Connector Project would not be necessary and would not be implemented if not for the Rockaway Project.

We¹ prepared this draft environmental impact statement (EIS) to assess the environmental impacts associated with construction and operation of the facilities proposed by Transco for the Rockaway and Northeast Connector Projects (Projects) in accordance with the requirements of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, as amended. NEPA, and the Council on Environmental Quality's (CEQ) regulations for implementing NEPA in Title 40 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 1501.6 (40 CFR 1501.6), call on federal, state, and local government agencies to cooperate in the preparation of EISs. In accordance with these provisions, the following agencies are participating as cooperating agencies² in the preparation of this draft EIS:

- U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI), National Park Service (NPS);
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA);
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), New York District;
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries); and
- City of New York.

The Rockaway Project would consist of two components: a 26-inch-diameter natural gas pipeline (the Rockaway Delivery Lateral) and a metering and regulating (M&R) facility with associated piping and equipment. The new pipeline would extend approximately 3.2 miles from an offshore interconnect with Transco's existing 26-inch-diameter Lower New York Bay Lateral (LNYBL) in the Atlantic Ocean, to an onshore delivery point at an interconnection with the National Grid pipeline system³ on the Rockaway Peninsula in Queens County, New York. A portion of the new pipeline would be constructed

¹ The pronouns "we," "us," and "our" refer to the environmental staff of the FERC's Office of Energy Projects.

² A cooperating agency is an agency that has jurisdiction over all or part of a project area and must make a decision on a project, and/or an agency that provides special expertise with regard to environmental or other resources.

³ The Rockaway Project would provide an additional delivery point to National Grid's local distribution companies, Brooklyn Union Gas Company (doing business as National Grid NY) and KeySpan Gas East Corporation, collectively referred to as National Grid.

on federal land (both onshore and offshore) within the Gateway National Recreation Area (GNRA), which is managed by the NPS. The M&R facility would be built within an historic airplane hangar complex at Floyd Bennett Field on federal land within the GNRA in the Borough of Brooklyn, Kings County, New York. Figure 1-1 depicts the location of these proposed facilities.

In conjunction with the Rockaway Project, National Grid would construct a new interconnecting pipeline and associated facilities, referred to as the Brooklyn-Queens Interconnect Project (BQI Project), between the proposed Rockaway Delivery Lateral and M&R facility. Although the BQI Project is not subject to the jurisdiction of the Commission, additional information about the National Grid project is provided in Section 1.4.

For the Northeast Connector Project, Transco proposes to add incremental compression at its existing Compressor Station 195 in York County, Pennsylvania; Compressor Station 205 in Mercer County, New Jersey; and Compressor Station 207 in Middlesex County, New Jersey. Transco would replace three existing natural gas-fired reciprocating engines with two new electric motor drives at Compressor Station 195 and uprate existing electric driven motors at Compressor Stations 205 and 207. These modifications would occur on lands owned by Transco within the existing compressor station sites. Figure 1-2 depicts the location of the existing compressor station facilities relative to the proposed Rockaway Project facilities.

Dependent upon Commission and other approvals, Transco intends to begin construction of the Projects during the spring of 2014.

1.1 PROJECT PURPOSE AND NEED

Transco's stated objectives for the Projects are to enhance the reliability and flexibility of National Grid's distribution system in New York City and to provide a new incremental supply of natural gas. Transco's objectives are consistent with the energy objectives identified in state and city planning documents. The State Energy Plan states that "planned pipeline additions for new delivery points into the downstate market...would significantly relieve capacity constraints [and] increase reliability" (State Energy Planning Board, 2009). Similarly, New York City's long-term growth plan states that the Rockaway Project "would critically reinforce gas supplies in Brooklyn and Queens" (New York City, 2011).

According to Transco, the Projects would meet these objectives by:

- providing firm delivery lateral service of 647 thousand dekatherms per day (Mdth/d) of natural gas to National Grid's distribution system on the Rockaway Peninsula in Queens County, New York through the Rockaway Project;
- providing as part of the 647 Mdth/d, 100 Mdth/d of new incremental (i.e., additional) natural gas supply to National Grid through the Northeast Connector Project; and
- enhancing the security and reliability of National Grid's distribution system by providing a new delivery point on the Rockaway Peninsula in Queens County that would allow National Grid to shift existing volumes of natural gas supply from an existing delivery point in Long Beach in Nassau County, New York.

Under Section 7(c) of the NGA, the Commission determines whether interstate natural gas transportation facilities are in the public convenience and necessity and, if so, grants a Certificate to construct and operate them. The Commission bases its decisions on technical competence, financing, rates, market demand, gas supply, environmental impact, long-term feasibility, and other issues concerning a proposed project.



This information is for environmental review purposes only.



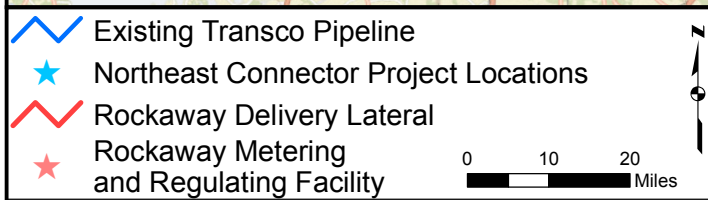
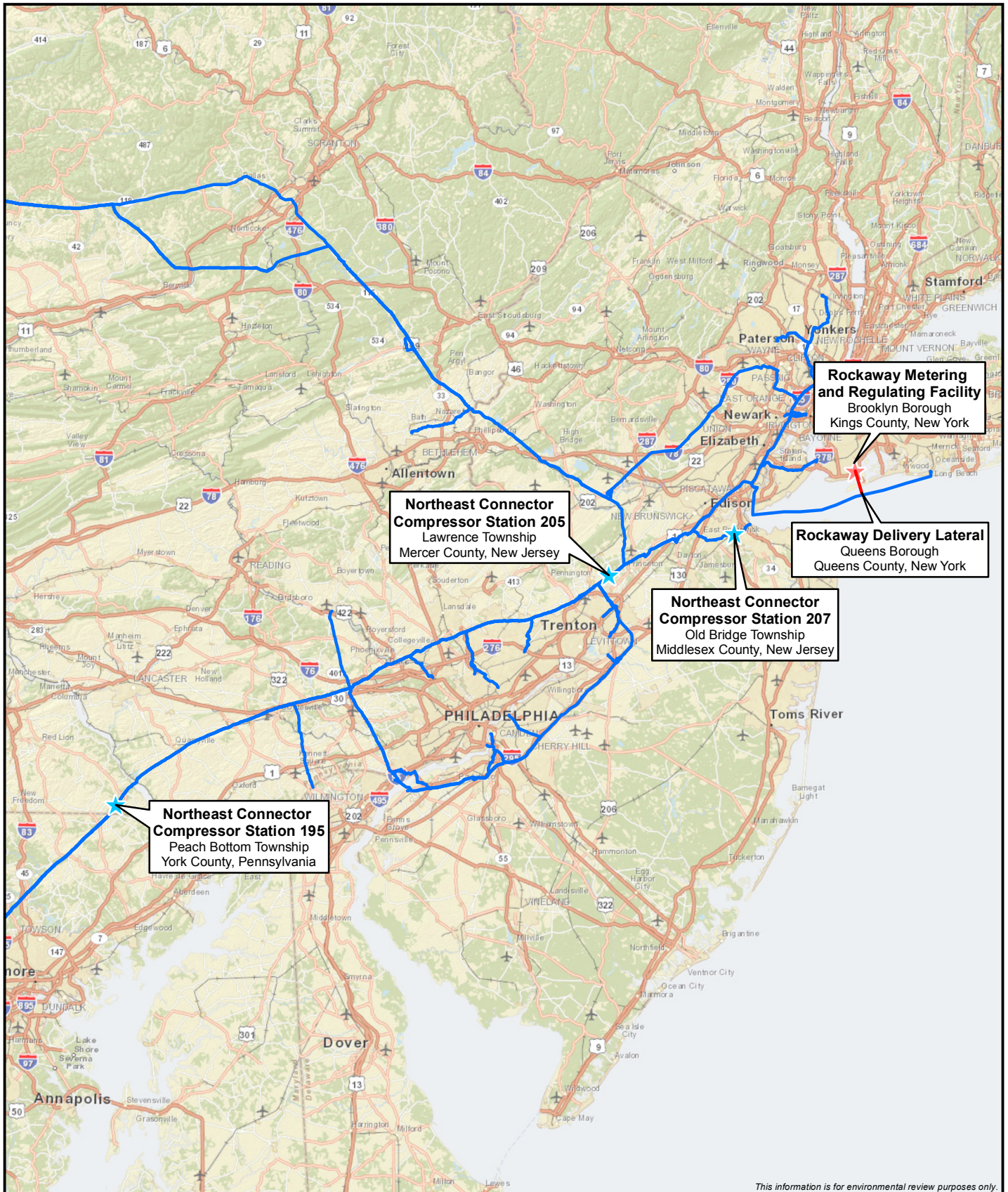


Figure 1-2
Rockaway Delivery Lateral
and Northeast Connector Projects
 Location of the Northeast Connector Project
 Relative to the Rockaway Project

1.2 PURPOSE AND SCOPE OF THE EIS

Our principal purposes in preparing this draft EIS are to:

- identify and assess potential impacts on the natural and human environment that would result from implementation of the Projects;
- describe and evaluate reasonable alternatives to the Projects that would avoid or minimize adverse effects to the environment;
- identify and recommend specific mitigation measures, as necessary, to minimize environmental impacts; and
- encourage and facilitate involvement by the public and interested agencies in the environmental review process.

The topics addressed in this draft EIS include: alternatives; geology; soils; groundwater; surface waters; wetlands; vegetation; wildlife and aquatic resources; threatened, endangered, and special-status species; land use; recreation; visual resources; socioeconomic; cultural resources; air quality and noise; reliability and safety; and cumulative impacts. This draft EIS describes the affected environment as it currently exists, addresses the environmental consequences of the Projects, and compares the potential impacts of the Projects to those of the alternatives. This draft EIS also presents our conclusions and recommended mitigation measures for the Projects.

1.2.1 Federal Energy Regulatory Commission

The FERC is an independent federal agency responsible for evaluating applications for authorization to construct and operate interstate natural gas pipeline facilities. If the Commission determines that a project is required by the public convenience and necessity, a Certificate is issued under Section 7(c) of the NGA and Part 157 of the Commission's regulations. As part of that determination, we conduct an environmental review in accordance with NEPA. We prepared this draft EIS to assess the potential environmental impacts associated with the Projects in compliance with the procedural requirements of NEPA, the CEQ's regulations for implementing NEPA (40 CFR 1500–1508), and the FERC's regulations for implementing NEPA (18 CFR 380).

As the lead federal agency for the Projects, the FERC is required to comply with Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973 (ESA), the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (MBTA), the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act (BGEPA), the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (MSA), the Marine Mammal Protection Act of 1972 (MMPA), Section 307 of the Coastal Zone Management Act of 1972 (CZMA), and Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA). These and other statutes have been taken into account in the preparation of this draft EIS.

The Commission will consider the findings of the final EIS as well as non-environmental issues in its review of Transco's applications to determine whether or not a Certificate should be issued for the Projects. A Certificate will be granted if the Commission finds that the evidence produced on financing, rates, market demand, gas supply, existing facilities and service, environmental impacts, long-term feasibility, and other issues demonstrates that the Projects are required by the public convenience and necessity. Environmental impact assessments and mitigation development are important factors in the determination of public convenience and necessity.

1.2.2 National Park Service

The NPS is a land managing agency within the DOI with jurisdiction over 80 million acres of federal land in the United States. It manages these lands to protect and preserve natural and cultural resources for the benefit of current and future generations. Currently, there is no general authority

available to the NPS to approve rights-of-way for natural gas pipelines across park land. Instead, park-specific legislation from the U.S. Congress is required for authority to allow construction of a natural gas pipeline across NPS land.

As noted above, the Rockaway Project would affect federal property (both onshore and offshore) within the GNRA, which is managed by the NPS. Transco coordinated with NPS staff and local congressional leaders to introduce a bill (i.e., the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act) authorizing the Secretary of the Interior to allow construction and operation of the Rockaway Project subject to receipt of the necessary permits and easements from the NPS. The bill was approved by the U.S. House of Representatives on February 8, 2012 and by the U.S. Senate on September 22, 2012. President Barack Obama signed the bill into law on November 27, 2012.

Transco anticipates submitting applications to the NPS in 2013 to obtain a right-of-way easement across GNRA land for the Rockaway Delivery Lateral, a lease agreement on GNRA land for the M&R facility, and a special use permit for temporary construction activities within the GNRA. The NPS must comply with the requirements of NEPA prior to reaching decisions on the applications for these authorizations. The NPS will review the draft EIS for consistency with NPS NEPA standards, and will adopt the final EIS per Title 40 CFR Part 1506.3 if it concludes that the document addresses its concerns regarding construction and operation of the Rockaway Project on GNRA lands.

As part of its evaluation of Transco's applications, the NPS will review the Rockaway Project for consistency with NPS land use and management policies as defined in a General Management Plan (GMP). NPS staff currently is in the process of updating the GMP for the GNRA to guide land use and management decisions affecting the park over the next two decades. A draft of the updated GMP/EIS was issued by the NPS for public comment on August 2, 2013. The new GMP is expected to be finalized in late 2013 or early 2014. NPS staff will conduct a consistency review using information from the new GMP to the extent that it is available given the schedule of the Rockaway Project.

1.2.3 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The EPA is an independent federal agency responsible for protecting human health and safeguarding the natural environment. It sets and enforces national standards under a variety of environmental laws and regulations in consultation with state, tribal, and local governments. EPA actions relevant to the permitting process for the Projects include:

- authority to review and veto permits issued by the USACE under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act (CWA) (see below);
- authority to review state-issued permits for project-related activities involving discharges of pollutants under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES);
- authority under Section 309 of the Clean Air Act (CAA) to review and publicly comment on the environmental impacts of major federal actions, including actions that are the subject of draft and final EISs; and
- responsibility for implementing certain procedural provisions of NEPA (e.g., publishing Notices of Availability for draft and final EISs in the Federal Register) to establish statutory timeframes for the environmental review process.

The EPA also has jurisdictional authority to control air pollution under the CAA (42 United States Code [USC] Chapter 85) by developing and enforcing rules and regulations for entities that emit toxic substances into the air. Under this authority, the EPA has developed regulations for major sources of air pollution. The EPA has delegated the authority to implement these regulations to state and local agencies, who are allowed to develop their own regulations for non-major sources. The EPA additionally

establishes general conformity applicability thresholds, with which a federal agency can determine whether a specific action requires a general conformity assessment for impacts on air quality.

1.2.4 U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, New York District

The USACE is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Defense responsible for regulating the discharge of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States under Section 404 of the CWA (33 USC 1344), and the construction of any structure affecting a navigable water of the United States under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act (RHA) (33 USC 403). The USACE must comply with requirements of NEPA prior to issuing a permit under these statutes. The New York District of the USACE will adopt the final EIS for the Rockaway Project per Title 40 CFR Part 1506.3 if it concludes that the document addresses its concerns relative to the permit programs it administers. The Northeast Connector Project is not expected to require a permit from the USACE.

As an element of its review, the New York District of the USACE will consider whether the proposed Rockaway Project represents the least environmentally damaging practicable alternative pursuant to guidelines for complying with Section 404(b)(1) of the CWA. The term “practicable” means available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of the purposes of the Rockaway Project.

Transco submitted an application for a Section 404/10 permit, which the New York District of the USACE received on January 10, 2013. Although this EIS addresses environmental impacts on surface waters, it does not serve as public notice for Transco’s application to the USACE. The USACE anticipates issuing a public notice for Transco’s application at approximately the same time as the draft EIS is noticed in the Federal Register. After review of Transco’s permit application, public comments, and the final EIS, the New York District of the USACE will document its permit decision, including any required mitigation commitments, in a decision document.

1.2.5 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration’s National Marine Fisheries Service (NOAA Fisheries) is a federal agency within the U.S. Department of Commerce responsible for stewardship of the nation’s living marine resources and their habitat. NOAA Fisheries is charged with the management, conservation, and protection of living marine resources within the United States’ Exclusive Economic Zone, which extends from three to 200 miles offshore. The Rockaway Project would affect living marine resources and habitat (marine mammals, threatened and endangered species, and Essential Fish Habitat (EFH)), which are managed by NOAA Fisheries under the MMPA, ESA, and MSA.

Both Transco and FERC staff are consulting with NOAA Fisheries to assess impacts on living marine resources. Transco submitted an application to NOAA Fisheries on March 19, 2013 for an Incidental Harassment Authorization (IHA) under the MMPA for the take of marine mammals during construction of the Rockaway Project. NOAA Fisheries must comply with the requirements of NEPA prior to issuing an IHA, and will adopt the final EIS if it concludes that the document satisfies its requirements relative to its mandates under the MMPA. As an element of its review, NOAA Fisheries will evaluate potential impacts to marine mammals and the proposed mitigation and monitoring measures for reducing those impacts.

1.2.6 City of New York

The City of New York is a municipal corporation. The City of New York, acting through its agencies, has agreed to participate as a cooperating agency in the preparation of this draft EIS. The New York City Mayor’s Office of Environmental Coordination (MOEC) is serving as the City’s liaison in this process.

1.3 PUBLIC REVIEW AND COMMENT

On March 13, 2009, Transco filed a request with the FERC to implement the Commission's NEPA pre-filing process for the Rockaway Project. The purpose of the pre-filing process is to encourage early involvement of interested stakeholders, facilitate interagency cooperation, and identify and resolve issues before an application is filed with the Commission. On March 26, 2009, the FERC granted Transco's request and established a pre-filing Docket Number (PF09-8-000) to place information filed by Transco, comments provided by stakeholders, and documents issued by the FERC and other agencies into the public record.

In conjunction with the pre-filing process, Transco implemented a stakeholder communication plan to identify and engage stakeholders, share information regarding the project, seek input on environmental and other issues, and provide opportunities for public comment. As part of its plan, Transco communicated with landowners; elected officials and staff; community leaders; federal, state, and local agencies; non-governmental organizations; local businesses; nearby residents; civic organizations; and other interested individuals and organizations. Transco used direct mail to provide information on the Rockaway Project to stakeholders and established a toll-free project hotline, email address, and Rockaway Project website. The website includes a project description and overview map, information on construction methods, answers to frequently asked questions, information on the FERC's environmental review process, and contact information for the Rockaway Project.

Transco held two public open house meetings to provide information on the Rockaway Project and solicit feedback from stakeholders on environmental issues and other concerns. The first was held in Far Rockaway in Queens County on April 24, 2012, and the second was held in Brooklyn in Kings County on April 25, 2012. Transco publicized the meetings via invitations sent to stakeholders, including nearby residents, public officials, and media; advertisements published in local newspapers; and press releases sent to media and public officials. We participated in the open house meetings and provided information on the environmental review process for the Rockaway Project. A combined total of 19 individuals signed in at the open house meetings.

Transco engaged federal and state agencies via telephone calls, meetings, and site visits to discuss the Rockaway Project, identify environmental and other issues, identify mitigation strategies for impacts on environmental resources, and determine permit requirements for the Rockaway Project. In particular, Transco engaged NPS staff to discuss construction and operation of the Rockaway Project facilities within the GNRA and impacts to resources on NPS lands.

We participated in interagency meetings, conference calls, and site visits for the Rockaway Project to identify issues to be addressed in this draft EIS. The meetings, conference calls, and site visits provided a forum for the exchange of information and supported the FERC's responsibility to coordinate federal authorizations and associated environmental review of the Rockaway Project. In total, we participated in 15 interagency meetings or conference calls and conducted four site visits. Additionally, we participated in 49 regular (often weekly or bi-weekly) conference calls with Transco and other agencies to discuss Rockaway Project issues. Summaries of the meetings, calls, and site visits were entered into the public record for the Rockaway Project, and are available for viewing on the FERC's eLibrary website (www.ferc.gov).⁴

⁴ Public meeting transcripts and comment letters are available for viewing on the FERC website (<http://www.ferc.gov>). Using the "eLibrary" link, select "General Search" from the eLibrary menu, enter the selected date range and "Docket No." excluding the last three digits (i.e., PF09-8), and follow the instructions. For assistance, call 1-866-208-3676, or e-mail FERCOnlineSupport@ferc.gov. Because scoping was conducted during the pre-filing review (i.e., before Transco filed a formal application with the FERC), PF09-8 must be entered in the Docket No. field to view the public scoping transcripts and comment letters.

On May 25, 2012, the FERC issued a *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Planned Rockaway Delivery Lateral Project, Request for Comments on Environmental Issues, and Notice of Public Scoping Meetings* (NOI). The NOI was published in the Federal Register on June 1, 2012, and copies were mailed to over 200 parties, including representatives of federal, state, and local agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; potentially affected landowners; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. The NOI described the FERC's environmental review process for the Rockaway Project; provided a preliminary list of issues for review in this draft EIS; requested written comments from the public on the scope of the draft EIS; announced the time and location of public scoping meetings; and invited other federal, state, and local agencies to participate as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EIS. The NOI opened the public scoping period and established a closing date of June 25, 2012 for receiving scoping comments.

The FERC held two public scoping meetings in the Rockaway Project area to solicit and receive comments on environmental issues associated with this project. The first scoping meeting was held on June 12, 2012 at the Aviator Sports and Events Center in Brooklyn in Kings County, and the second was held on June 13, 2012 at the Knights of Columbus Rockaway Council 2672 on Rockaway Beach in Queens County. The scoping meetings provided an opportunity for the public to learn more about the proposed Rockaway Project and to provide comments on environmental issues to be addressed in this draft EIS. A combined total of 11 individuals provided verbal comments at the scoping meetings. Transcripts of the meetings, as well as 120 written comment letters, were entered into the public record for the Rockaway Project and are available for viewing on the FERC's eLibrary website (www.ferc.gov).

Transco filed an application with the FERC for a Certificate for the Rockaway Project on January 7, 2013. The Commission subsequently issued a Notice of Application on January 22, 2013, assigning Docket Number CP13-36-000 to this project. The Notice of Application was published in the Federal Register on January 29, 2013. It announced the filing of Transco's application and the end of the pre-filing process and opened the period for intervention on the Rockaway Project. The Commission also mailed an update bulletin for the Rockaway Project to stakeholders on February 7, 2013.

Transco filed an application with the FERC for a Certificate for the Northeast Connector Project on April 9, 2013. The Commission issued a Notice of Application on April 17, 2013, assigning Docket Number CP13-132-000 to the project. On April 24, 2013, the Notice of Application was published in the Federal Register. The FERC subsequently issued a *Notice of Intent to Prepare an Environmental Impact Statement for the Proposed Northeast Connector Project and Request for Comments on Environmental Issues*. This NOI was mailed to over 800 parties, including representatives of federal, state, and local agencies; elected officials; environmental and public interest groups; Native American tribes; potentially affected landowners; other interested parties; and local libraries and newspapers. The NOI described the relationship between the Projects; described the FERC's environmental review process; provided a preliminary list of issues for review in the draft EIS; requested written comments from the public on the scope of this draft EIS; and invited other federal, state, and local agencies to participate as cooperating agencies in the preparation of the EIS. The NOI identified a closing date of May 27, 2013 for receiving scoping comments.

The Commission received four written comment letters in response to the NOI for the Northeast Connector Project. These letters were entered into the public record and are available for viewing on the FERC's eLibrary website (www.ferc.gov).

Prior to the issuance of this draft EIS to the public, we prepared a preliminary administrative draft EIS that was distributed to the NPS, EPA, USACE, NOAA Fisheries, and MOEC in their roles as cooperating agencies for review and comment. Each agency provided us with comments, which have been incorporated into this document. All substantive scoping comments submitted to the FERC, from scoping meetings, interagency coordination meetings, and letters, were considered and addressed in the preparation of this draft EIS.

Table 1.3-1 lists the environmental issues and concerns identified by commenters during the scoping process and identifies the section where the issue is addressed. Appendix A provides the distribution list for the draft EIS.

| TABLE 1.3-1 Key Environmental Concerns Identified During the Scoping Process for the Rockaway Project | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Issue/Specific Comment | Environmental Impact Statement Section Addressing Comment |
| General | |
| Purpose and need | 1.1 |
| Roles of cooperating agencies | 1.2 |
| Commission jurisdiction over natural gas pipelines | 1.0, 1.2.1 |
| Easement across Gateway National Recreation Area | 1.2.2, 2.1.1, 4.5.3.1, 4.8.2 |
| Construction methods, particularly offshore methods | 2.3 |
| Area of onshore and offshore disturbance and volume of excavated material | 2.2, 2.3, 4.2.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3, 4.8.1 |
| Pile driving operations | 2.3.1.5, 4.5.2.1 |
| Depth of cover for the offshore pipeline | 2.3.1.4 |
| Backfilling of offshore excavation areas and restoration of offshore bathymetry | 2.3.1.9, 4.1.7, 4.2.3, 4.3.2.3, 4.6.3.2 |
| Drilling fluid | 2.3.1.5, 2.3.1.9, 4.1.7, 4.3.2.3, 4.3.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3.2, 4.8.7 |
| Opportunities for public comment | 1.3 |
| Construction of liquefied natural gas facilities | 2.7, 3.3.8 |
| Non-jurisdictional facilities | 1.4, 4.13, Appendix B |
| Impacts from offshore pipeline maintenance | 2.6.1, 4.5.3.1, 4.6.4, 4.7.3.1 |
| Construction schedule | 2.4 |
| Alternatives | |
| No action alternative | 3.1 |
| Alternative sites for the M&R facility | 3.5 |
| Alternative energy sources, including renewable energy | 3.2 |
| Alternative offshore construction methods | 3.6 |
| Meteorological Hazards | |
| Impacts associated with hurricanes or flooding | 4.1.4.3, 4.1.4.4 |
| Soils | |
| Contaminated soils, including marine sediments | 4.2.2, 4.6.3.1 |
| Water Quality and Aquatic Resources | |
| Storage of hazardous materials and fuel, and spill reporting procedures | 4.3.1.4, 4.3.2.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3.2, 4.6.5, Appendix F, Appendix G |
| Impacts of dredging, including turbidity and sedimentation | 4.3.2.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3 |
| Impacts of horizontal directional drilling | 4.3.2.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3.2, 4.8.7, Appendix H |
| Noise impacts on marine wildlife | 4.5.2.1, 4.5.2.2, 4.6.3.2, 4.7 |
| Impacts on marine wildlife including Essential Fish Habitat | 4.5.2, 4.6.3 - 4.6.6, 4.7.1.1, 4.8.4.1 |
| Impacts on the seafloor, particularly hard bottom surfaces and artificial reefs | 4.1.7, 4.3.2.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3.2, 4.8.4.1 |
| Impacts of hydrostatic testing on the marine environment | 4.3.2.3, 4.5.2.1, 4.6.3.2 |
| Impacts on restoration activities within Jamaica Bay | 4.8.7 |
| Impacts on water quality | 4.3, 4.6 |
| Wetlands | |
| Impacts on wetlands | 4.3.3 |
| Vegetation | |
| Re-seeding disturbed areas | 4.4.4 |
| Spread of invasive species | 4.4.3 |

| TABLE 1.3-1 (cont'd) Key Environmental Concerns Identified During the Scoping Process for the Rockaway Project | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Issue/Specific Comment | Environmental Impact Statement Section Addressing Comment |
| Wildlife | |
| Impacts on migratory birds and bird habitat | 4.5.2.4 |
| Impacts on terrestrial wildlife | 4.5.1, 4.5.2.3 |
| Special Status Species | |
| Impacts on federally and state-listed species | 4.7 |
| Impacts on right whale | 4.7.1.1, Appendix N |
| Impacts on Atlantic sturgeon | 4.7.1.2 |
| Impacts on marine turtles | 4.7.1.3 |
| Impacts on piping plover | 4.7.1.6 |
| Land Use | |
| Impacts on navigation | 4.8.4.2, 4.9.4 |
| Use of NPS lands for industrial development | 4.8.2, 4.8.7, 4.8.8 |
| Impacts on other land uses within the GNRA, including Floyd Bennett Field | 4.8.7, 4.8.9, 4.11.2, 4.11.3 |
| Impacts on recreational activities, including impacts on a bike path | 4.8.2, 4.8.7 |
| Impacts on bee keeping | 4.8.9 |
| Socioeconomics | |
| Economic impacts on commercial and recreational fisheries and fisherman | 4.5, 4.6, 4.8.4.1, 4.9.6 |
| Economic effects of the Rockaway Project | 4.9 |
| Cultural Resources | |
| Adaptive re-use of the historic airplane hangars on Floyd Bennett Field | 4.10.1, 4.13.12 |
| Impacts on cultural resources, including architectural sites and shipwrecks | 4.10.1, 4.13.12 |
| Air Quality | |
| Impacts on air quality | 4.11.1, 4.13.13.1 |
| Emissions from the M&R facility | 4.11.1.3 |
| Radon | 4.11.1.5 |
| Noise | |
| Noise and noise mitigation | 4.11.2 |
| Location of the measurement for noise sensitive areas in Floyd Bennett Field | Table 4.11.2-3 |
| Reliability and Safety | |
| Potential for fire or explosion | 4.12 |
| Availability of fire hydrants and firefighting equipment at Floyd Bennett Field | 4.12.3 |
| Impacts on public health and safety | 4.12.3 |
| Monitoring of the pipeline system, including inspections and remote monitoring | 4.12.1, 4.12.3 |
| Emergency response, including evacuation plans | 4.12.1, 4.12.3 |
| Terrorism | 4.12.4 |
| Cumulative Impacts | |
| Impacts from development in the Marcellus shale region | 4.13 |
| Climate change | 4.13.15 |
| Impacts from the BQI Project | 1.4, 4.13, Appendix B |
| Cumulative impacts on fisheries and aquatic resources | 4.13.7 |

1.4 NON-JURISDICTIONAL FACILITIES

Under Section 7 of the NGA, the FERC is required to consider all factors bearing on the public convenience and necessity as part of its decision to authorize interstate natural gas facilities. Occasionally, projects reviewed by the FERC have associated facilities that do not fall under the jurisdiction of the Commission. These “non-jurisdictional” facilities may be integral to the need for a project (e.g., a power plant to be built at the end of a FERC-jurisdictional pipeline); or they may be associated as minor components that would be built as a result of the jurisdictional facilities (e.g., an electric distribution line providing service to a natural gas compressor station).

Non-jurisdictional facilities associated with the Projects include National Grid’s BQI Project and a proposal by the Philadelphia Electric Company (PECO) to rebuild a portion of an existing electric transmission line to provide power for the electric motor drives that would be installed at Compressor Station 195. Environmental impacts resulting from these projects are included in our assessment of cumulative impacts in Section 4.13.

1.4.1 Brooklyn-Queens Interconnect Project

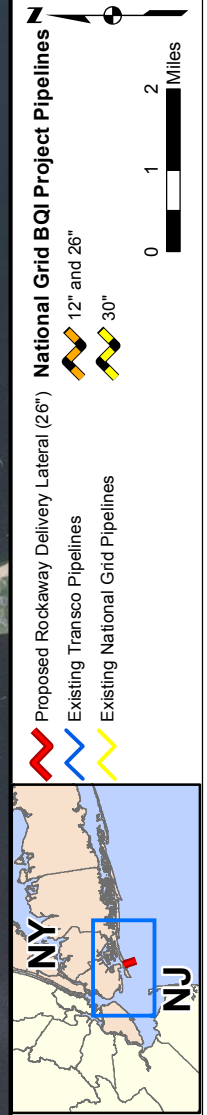
The proposed Rockaway Project would connect to non-jurisdictional pipeline facilities being built by National Grid as part of the BQI Project. The BQI Project consists of a series of system upgrades to enhance the reliability of service to customers by boosting delivery pressures and eliminating an existing dead-end feed on the Rockaway Peninsula. The BQI Project will provide a new delivery point that offers a long-term solution to meet the supply needs of National Grid’s system by delivering natural gas to the Brooklyn area, where supplies are currently needed. The location of the BQI Project in relation to the proposed Rockaway Project is depicted on Figure 1.4-1.

Phase I of the BQI Project consists of the installation of two parallel 12- and 26-inch-diameter natural gas pipelines, each estimated to be approximately 8,300 feet long, under Flatbush Avenue. The pipelines will extend from an existing 8-inch-diameter distribution pipeline in the vicinity of the southernmost airplane hangar complex at Floyd Bennett Field in Kings County, to an existing 8-inch-diameter pipeline at Beach 169th Street south of Beach Channel Drive on the Rockaway Peninsula in Queens County. The 12-inch-diameter pipeline will be designed to operate at a typical maximum allowable operating pressure (MAOP) for a transmission pipeline, but National Grid will operate it at lower pressure to distribute natural gas to residential and commercial buildings. When in-service, this pipeline will allow National Grid to boost the operating pressure on the west end of the Rockaway Peninsula thereby eliminating current low pressure and delivery reliability issues. The 26-inch-diameter pipeline similarly will be designed to operate at a typical MAOP for a transmission pipeline, but National Grid will operate it at 60 pounds per square inch gauge (psig). This pipeline initially will provide a redundant supply source of natural gas to the Rockaways. If the proposed Rockaway Project is constructed, then National Grid’s 26-inch-diameter pipeline would serve as a transmission pipeline operating at higher pressures to transmit natural gas over long distances.



This information is for environmental review purposes only.

Figure 1.4-1
Rockaway Delivery Lateral
and Northeast Connector Projects
 Location of the Brooklyn - Queens Interconnect Project
 Relative to the Rockaway Project



Phase II of the BQI Project will entail the installation of approximately 12,000 feet of 30-inch-diameter natural gas transmission pipeline between National Grid's existing 30-inch-diameter, 350 psig transmission main at the intersection of Hendrickson Street and Avenue U and the 26-inch-diameter Phase I pipeline at a point in the vicinity of the southernmost airplane hangar complex at Floyd Bennett Field. This pipeline will transport natural gas to the Brooklyn service area and National Grid's distribution system via the Rockaway Project, if it is constructed. In addition, the design of the 30-inch-diameter pipeline will allow for a future increase in natural gas supply in response to an increase in demand.

The BQI Project is regulated at the state level by the New York State Department of Public Service. Environmental review of the BQI Project was conducted under the New York State Environmental Quality Review Act (SEQRA) with the New York City Office of the Mayor as lead agency.⁵ The review was based on information provided by National Grid in its Environmental Assessment Statement (EAS) (National Grid, 2011) pursuant to Executive Order (EO) 91 of 1977, as amended, and the Rules of Procedure for City Environmental Quality Review (CEQR) found at Title 62, Chapter 5 of the Rules of the City of New York and 6 New York Codes, Rules, and Regulations (NYCRR), Part 617, State Environmental Quality Review.

On December 2, 2011, the New York City Office of the Mayor issued a Negative Declaration (CEQR No. 12OOM001K) for the BQI Project in accordance with Article 8 of the New York State Environmental Conservation Law. The Negative Declaration concluded that the installation of the project will "not have any potentially significant adverse effects on the quality of the environment" (New York City Office of the Mayor, 2011). A copy of the Negative Declaration, which provides a summary of the New York City Office of the Mayor's findings from the environmental review process, is provided in Appendix B.

1.4.2 Philadelphia Electric Company Project

In conjunction with the proposed Northeast Connector Project, PECO plans to rebuild a portion of its existing 4 kilovolt (kV) electric transmission system to a three-phase 345 kV system to provide power to Compressor Station 195 in York County, Pennsylvania. While some of the existing power poles within the system would be reused, Transco estimates that up to 80 percent would be replaced with new ones, possibly with new spacing between the poles. The rebuild would occur within the existing right-of-way for the electric transmission system.

1.5 PERMITS, APPROVALS, AND REGULATORY REQUIREMENTS

Tables 1.5-1 and 1.5-2 list the major federal, state, and local permits, approvals, and consultations that may be required for construction and operation of the Projects. The tables also provide the status of the process for obtaining each authorization.

⁵ A copy of the EAS is available online at <http://www.scribd.com/doc/110071924/Brooklyn-Queens-Interconnect-Environmental-Assessment-Statement>.

**TABLE 1.5-1
Major Permits, Approvals, and Consultations for the Rockaway Project ^a**

| Agency | Permit/Approval/Consultation | Agency Action | Status |
|----------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------|
| U.S. Congress | | | |
| | New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act | Legislation allowing the Secretary of the Interior to approve a right-of-way easement and special use permit for Rockaway Project facilities within the Gateway National Recreation Area | Signed into law on November 27, 2012 |
| Federal Agencies | | | |
| Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) | Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (Certificate) under Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act | Determine whether the Rockaway Project would be in the public interest, and consider issuing a Certificate | Application filed on January 7, 2013 |
| National Park Service | Right-of-Way Easement, Lease Agreement, and Special Use Permit as allowed by the New York City Natural Gas Supply Enhancement Act | Consider issuing a right-of-way easement, lease agreement, and special use permit for Rockaway Project facilities and construction activities on Gateway National Recreation Area land | Application to be filed in 2013 |
| U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) | Department of the Army permit under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act | Consider issuing a permit for discharges of dredged or fill material into waters of the United States | Application submitted on January 7, 2013 |
| | Department of the Army permit under Section 10 of the Rivers and Harbors Act | Consider issuing a permit for structures or work in or affecting navigable waters of the United States | Application submitted on January 7, 2013 |
| U.S. Coast Guard | Notice to Mariners, Aids to Navigation and Obstruction, and New York Sector – Marine Activity Approval | Notices/approvals required from the U.S. Coast Guard | Applications to be submitted in the first quarter of 2014 |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Long Island Field Office | Consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act | Consider the FERC's finding of impact on federally listed and proposed threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat, and provide a Biological Opinion if the action is likely to adversely affect federally listed or proposed species or their critical habitat | Ongoing |
| | Consultation under Section 2 of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act | Provide comments regarding the prevention of loss or damage to wildlife resources | Ongoing |
| | Consultation under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Section 3 of Executive Order 13186 | Provide comments regarding Rockaway Project effects on listed migratory birds | Ongoing |
| | Consultation under the Marine Mammal Protection act | Provide comments regarding protected species | Ongoing |

TABLE 1.5-1 (cont'd)
Major Permits, Approvals, and Consultations Required for the Rockaway Project ^a

| Agency | Permit/Approval/ Consultation | Agency Action | Status |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, National Marine Fisheries Service | Consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act | Consider the FERC's finding of impact on federally listed and proposed threatened and endangered marine species and their habitat | Ongoing |
| | Consultation under the Marine Mammal Protection Act | Provide comments regarding impacts to marine mammals | Application for an Incidental Harassment Authorization submitted on March 19, 2013 |
| | Consultation under the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act | Assess impacts and provide comments to prevent loss of and damage to Essential Fish Habitat | Ongoing |
| | Consultation under Section 2 of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act | Provide comments regarding the prevention of loss or damage to wildlife resources | Ongoing |
| U.S. Environmental Protection Agency | Review under Section 404 of the Clean Water Act | Review Section 404 applications to the USACE for dredge-and-fill activities, and consider exercising veto power over permits issued by the USACE | Ongoing |
| | Compliance with the Clean Air Act | Determine applicability of General Conformity; review and publicly comment on the environmental impacts of major federal actions | Conformity analysis filed on January 7, 2013; no further analysis required |
| Advisory Council on Historic Preservation | Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act | Provide comments if the Rockaway Project would affect historic properties | Ongoing |
| State of New York | | | |
| New York State Department of State | Consistency review under the Coastal Zone Management Act | Review the Rockaway Project for consistency with the coastal zone management plan, and issue a determination of consistency | Application submitted on January 7, 2013; review period stayed for 60 days beginning July 30, 2013 |
| New York State Department of Environmental Conservation | Water Quality Certificate under Section 401 of the Clean Water Act | Consider issuing a water quality certificate for the Rockaway Project | Application submitted on January 7, 2013 |
| | Coastal Erosion Permit under Article 34, Environmental Conservation Law, Coastal Erosion Hazard Area | Consider issuing a permit to the Rockaway Project | Application submitted on January 7, 2013 |
| | General Permit for Stormwater Discharges from Construction Activity under the State Pollution Discharge Elimination System Program | Consider issuing the General Permit for Stormwater Discharges | Application to be submitted in 2013 |

TABLE 1.5-1 (cont'd)
Major Permits, Approvals, and Consultations Required for the Rockaway Project ^a

| Agency | Permit/Approval/ Consultation | Agency Action | Status |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------|
| | Hydrostatic Test Water Permit/ Notification of Withdrawal and Discharge Locations for Water Used in Hydrostatic Testing under the State Discharge Elimination System Program | Consider issuing the Hydrostatic Test Water Permit/Notification of Withdrawal and Discharge Locations for Water Used in Hydrostatic Testing | Application to be submitted in 2013 |
| New York Natural Heritage Program | Consultation on rare or state-listed plants and animals, significant natural communities, and significant habitats | Provide information on the potential for rare or state-listed species and significant communities and habitats in the Rockaway Project area | Completed in May 2012 |
| New York State Office of Parks, Recreation and Historic Preservation, Historic Preservation Field Services Bureau | Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act | Review and comment on effects to historic properties | Ongoing |
| New York State Office of General Services | Submerged lands easement for the pipeline and cathodic protection system | Consider issuing an easement for the offshore pipeline and cathodic protection system in state waters | Application to be submitted in 2013 |
| Local | | | |
| City of New York | Cooperating agency with the FERC for preparation of an EIS under NEPA | Provide comments on the Rockaway Project | Ongoing |
| New York City Department of City Planning | Consistency review under the New York City Waterfront Revitalization Program | Review the Rockaway Project for consistency with the program, and issue a determination of consistency | Application submitted on January 7, 2013 |
| New York City Department of Environmental Protection | Utilities (sewer and water) potentially impacted during construction of the M&R facility, Noise Mitigation Plan (Self-Certification), Fossil Fuels Combustion Equipment Application for a Permit to Construct and Certificate to Operate the M&R facility | Review the Rockaway Project and consider issuing approvals, as appropriate | Applications to be submitted in 2013 |
| New York City Department of Buildings | After-Hours Work Approval | Considering issuing approval for after-hours work | Applications to be submitted in 2013 |
| Triborough Bridge and Tunnel Authority (also known as Metropolitan Transportation Authority Bridges and Tunnels) | Construction Permit for the on-shore horizontal direction drill entry site on Rockaway Beach | Consider issuing a Construction Permit | To be acquired by National Grid |
| ^a Consultations with Native American tribes are discussed in Section 4.10.3. | | | |

**TABLE 1.5-2
Major Permits, Approvals, and Consultations for the Northeast Connector Project ^a**

| Agency | Permit/Approval/Consultation | Agency Action | Status |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| Federal Agencies | | | |
| Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) | Certificate of Public Convenience and Necessity (Certificate) under Section 7(c) of the Natural Gas Act | Determine whether the Northeast Connector Project would be in the public interest, and consider issuing a Certificate | Application filed on April 9, 2013 |
| U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Pennsylvania and New Jersey Field Offices | Consultation under Section 7 of the Endangered Species Act | Consider the FERC's finding of impact on federally listed and proposed threatened and endangered species and their critical habitat, and provide a Biological Opinion if the action is likely to adversely affect federally listed or proposed species or their critical habitat | Completed on June 7, 2013 |
| | Consultation under Section 2 of the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act | Provide comments regarding the prevention of loss or damage to wildlife resources | Completed on June 7, 2013 |
| | Consultation under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and Section 3 of Executive Order 13186 | Provide comments regarding effects on listed migratory birds | Ongoing |
| Pennsylvania | | | |
| Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection, Bureau of Waterways Engineering and Wetlands | General Permit for Stormwater Discharges Associated with Construction Activities under the National Pollution Discharge Elimination System | Consider issuing the General Permit for the discharge of Stormwater during construction | Notice of Intent to be submitted in March 2014 |
| Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission, Bureau for Historic Preservation | Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act | Review and comment on effects to historic properties | Ongoing |
| New Jersey | | | |
| New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection, Historic Preservation Office | Consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act | Review and comment on effects to historic properties | Completed on November 30, 2011 |